SHRI S.S. AHLUWALIA: Sir, ...*(Interruptions)*...

श्री शरद यादव: हिन्दुस्तान को बांटते हुए, टुकड़े करते हुए दो वर्ष हो गए ...**(व्यवधान)**... । आप रेल मंत्री को बुलाइए ...**(व्यवधान)**... आप प्रधान मंत्री को बुलाइए ...**(व्यवधान)**... आप गृह मंत्री को बुलाइए ...**(व्यवधान)**... । हमें उन्हीं से जवाब चाहिए ...**(व्यवधान)**... ।

MR. CHAIRMAN: Why can't we say this at 12 o'clock? ...*(Interruptions)*... The House is adjourned till 12 o'clock.

The House then adjourned at six minutes past eleven of the clock.

The House re-assembled at twelve of the clock.
MR. DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN in the chair.

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WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Small Savings Schemes

†*41. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI : Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the deposits in small savings schemes being run through post offices have reduced due to reduction in interest rates during the last few years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that interest rates being offered by banks are higher;

(c) if so, whether Government as considering to make the interest rate of small savings schemes equal to those of the banks;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) Interest rates on Small savings Schemes have remained unchanged since 1st March, 2003. The gross small savings collections during 2006-07 at Rs. 1,82,181 crore declined to Rs. 1,40,443 crore during 2007-08 (Provisional). The decline of 23 per cent in gross collections under various small savings schemes reflects, *inter-alia*, investors' preference for alternative savings instruments.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) There is no proposal under consideration of Government to make the interest rate of Small Savings Schemes equal to those of the banks.

(e) Interest rates on small savings schemes are Administered Interest Rates. High rates of administered interest have fiscal implications and therefore, need to be linked to the cost of borrowings by the Central Government. As per the recommendations of the Committee on Administered Interest Rates and Other Related Issues Chaired by Dr. Y.V. Reddy, the then Deputy Governor, RBI, these interest rates are benchmarked to the average yield on Government Securities (G-Sec.) of comparable maturity in the secondary market, with a suitable spread up to 50 basis points depending upon the maturity and liquidity of the instruments.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

Recent analysis shows that while the average yield on Government Securities of shorter maturities (one to three years) is at present slightly higher compared to interest rates on Small Savings Schemes of comparable maturities, the interest rates on Post Office Monthly Income Account (POMIA), NSC-VIII Issue, Kisan Vikas Patra and Senior Citizens Saving Scheme still enjoy a reasonable spread over G-Sec. yield.

Net collections under small savings schemes are on lent to the States and serve as a source of funding their Annual Plans. Any increase in the small savings interest rates will result in a concomitant increase in the on-lending rate to the States. The State Governments have not been comfortable even with the existing rates of 9.5% for 25 years and any increase thereof will imply higher debt servicing costs and is likely to be resisted.

CNG filling stations in NCR

*42. SHRI HARISH RAWAT:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indraprastha Gas Limited (IGL) has failed to provide adequate number of CNG filling stations in the National Capital and NCR town resulting in inconvenience to CNG vehicle owners;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether CNG vehicle owners have to wait hours together to get fuel from the CNG stations; and

(d) if so, the steps taken by Government to set up more CNG stations in the National Capital and NCR towns and also to increase the filling capacity of the existing CNG stations?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MURLI DEORA): (a) and (b) At present, IGL has 163 CNG stations in Delhi, the highest number in any city in India. There are 469 dispensers installed in these stations, catering to around 2,50,000 vehicles. Non-availability of land has been a constraint in setting up CNG stations. The number of CNG run private cars in Delhi has increased phenomenally in the past few months because of the differential in prices of petrol / diesel and CNG, thus putting increased load on IGL's existing CNG infrastructure. Also a very large number of CNG run private vehicles from adjoining NCR towns, as also all CNG buses of UP State Road Transport Corporation and Haryana Roadways originating from NCR towns, are being filled in Delhi due to absence of CNG fuelling facilities in NCR towns.

As regards development of CNG infrastructure in the cities of Gurgaon and Faridabad in Haryana, the State Government of Haryana did not give permission to IGL to operate. Subsequently, the Hon'ble Supreme Court gave interim direction in MC Mehta *vs* Union of India and other (13029/1985) on 04.04.2008 *inter alia* that IGL supplies CNG in Gurgaon and Faridabad to two private parties, which would develop the CNG infrastructure in those cities. At present, IGL is supplying CNG to Gurgaon through cascades and only two daughter booster CNG stations have been started there.